

1.0 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR ACTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Casper District Office, Bureau of Land Management has prepared this Environmental Assessment to evaluate and disclose the potential environmental impacts associated with additional natural gas exploration and development as proposed by Intoil, Inc. (Intoil) within the Cooper Reservoir Unit (CRU) and adjacent areas (project area) located in western Natrona County, Wyoming (Figure 1.1). Additional exploration and development within the Cooper Reservoir Natural Gas Development Project Area would generally consist of the following component activities:

- construction of up to 73 additional well locations within the overall project area;
- construction or reconstruction of approximately 34.39 miles of access road necessary to provide access to those well locations proposed by Intoil;
- installation of approximately 30.42 miles of buried natural gas pipeline for the gathering and transportation of gas produced from wells within the project area to a connection with an existing gas sales pipeline;
- installation of processing and production facilities, and the routine operation/maintenance of commercially productive wells within the field;
- expansion of existing gas compression to facilitate sales of natural gas produced within the project area; and
- abandonment and reclamation of individual well location and access roads as they are determined to be commercially non-productive.

In July, 1996, the Casper District Office, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) and issued a Decision Record (USDI-BLM 1996) approving a proposal by Intoil to drill six (6) natural gas wells and construct associated facilities in the CRU (refer to Figure 1.2). The Decision Record stated that approval of the proposed action would not result in any undue or unnecessary environmental degradation and that the proposed action was in conformance with the Platte River Resource Area (PRRA) Resource Management Plan (RMP), which was approved in July, 1985 (USDI-BLM 1985a). Since the approval of the subject EA, the BLM has received additional proposals from Intoil to continue development in the CRU in an attempt to further define the productive limits of the Cooper Reservoir Natural Gas Field. These proposals have been precipitated by the commercial success of specific wells which were analyzed in the *Development of Federal Oil and Gas Leases in the Cooper Reservoir Unit During Preparation of the Cooper Reservoir Field Development Project Environmental Assessment* and subsequently drilled by Intoil in 1996 and 1997.

The project area considered in the original Cooper Reservoir Unit EA encompassed those lands included within the CRU (+/- 1,560 acres) and a 280 acre lease owned by Prima Oil & Gas Company situated along the eastern boundary of the CRU. Intoil now proposes to drill up to a maximum of 73 additional wells within the expanded Cooper Reservoir Natural Gas Development Project Area (CRNGDPA) along with the roads, pipelines, and ancillary facilities necessary for the production of commercially successful wells drilled in conjunction with this expanded exploration and development proposal. These activities are hereafter referred to as the Proposed Action. Those lands potentially affected by implementation of the Proposed Action are defined as the “project area” and the boundaries of this project area are shown on Figure 1.3.

The initial Cooper Reservoir Unit EA was an interim analysis designed to allow Intoil to gather additional geologic information on leases within the CRU prior to the preparation of a more comprehensive Field Development Environmental Assessment - should drilling operations on the 6 initial wells warrant additional exploration and/or development of federal oil/gas leases within and/or adjacent to the CRU. In this regard, federal regulations require additional analyses of environmental consequences whenever the scope of a proposed action exceeds that examined in past documents prepared under the *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA). This Field Development EA incorporates the original Cooper Reservoir Unit EA by reference and expands upon that analysis as necessary to provide guidelines for the implementation of additional exploration and development within the expanded project area. Through interdisciplinary analysis and review, consideration of reasonable alternatives, and public participation, this EA will serve as a vehicle for:

- determining the significance of environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Action and alternatives;
- assisting in the decision-making process;
- deciding whether an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is necessary; and,
- identifying and developing appropriate mitigation measures to minimize the environmental impacts of the Proposed Action and alternatives.

1.2 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

As indicated above, Intoil proposes to drill up to a total of 73 additional natural gas wells in the project area over a period of approximately 5 to 10 years. This activity would be in addition to the 19 well locations which have been previously approved and subsequently drilled within the project area; 7 of which have been plugged, abandoned, and the locations successfully reclaimed; and 12 of which are either currently producing, capable of production, or are being utilized for injection purposes within the CRNGDPA. Implementation of the Proposed Action would further define the productive potential of the Lower Fort Union and Lance Formations underlying existing oil/gas leases within the CRNGDPA.

The development of federal oil and gas leases is an integral part of the BLM oil and gas leasing program under the authority of the *Mineral Leasing Act* (MLA) of 1920 as amended (30 U.S.C. 181, *et seq*), the *Federal Land Policy and Management Act* (FLPMA) of 1976 (P.L. 94-579), the *Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Royalty Management Act* (FOOGRMA) of 1982 (30 U.S.C. 1701, *et seq*), and the *Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act* (FOOGLRA) of 1987 (43 CFR Part 3100). The BLM's oil and gas leasing program is intended to encourage the development of domestic oil and gas reserves, thereby reducing national dependence upon foreign energy supplies.

1.3 NEPA COMPLIANCE

This Environmental Assessment was prepared pursuant to:

- the *National Environmental Policy Act* (NEPA) of 1969, as amended;
- subsequent regulations adopted by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) found in 40 CFR Part 1500-1508; and
- applicable Bureau of Land Management rules, regulations, and policies regarding implementation of NEPA and compliance with CEQ regulations.

This EA was prepared under a third-party contract with the guidance, participation and independent evaluation of the Bureau of Land Management, who is in agreement with the findings of this analysis, and who hereby approves and takes responsibility for the scope and content herein. This EA is intended to be a public document which analyzes the probable and known impacts upon components of the human environment which would result from implementation of the Proposed Action and alternatives, and reaches a conclusion regarding the magnitude of the impact(s). Furthermore, this EA was designed to provide the BLM with both documented evidence and a level of analysis sufficient to allow a determination of whether:

- the impacts from the Proposed Action (or project alternatives) on the human environment are significant, thereby triggering the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS); or
- that a *Finding of No Significant Impact* (FONSI) is warranted.

If the BLM determines that impacts are insignificant, a *Finding of No Significant Impact* (FONSI) and *Decision Record* (DR) would be prepared and Intoil would then be allowed to proceed with development in the CRU and adjacent areas identified within this document. If, however, the BLM determines that impacts are significant, the agency would then be required to prepare an EIS.

This environmental assessment is not a decision document. It merely provides documentation of the process used to analyze the impacts of the Proposed Action and project alternatives, if any, on the human environment. Decisions regarding implementation of the Proposed Action or project alternatives will be fully documented in a *Decision Record* which will be issued by the BLM and will

apply only to those lands and resources for which they have been granted specific management responsibility.

Various additional aspects of the environment are regulated by other federal, state, and/or local agencies and this EA is not intended to eliminate the need for BLM to pursue permit approval(s) from these regulatory authorities. To the contrary, this document is also designed to provide these agencies with the information necessary to assist them in arriving at their own independent decisions regarding the issuance of permits and approvals necessary for BLM to proceed with the Proposed Action. In this regard, it is essential that these additional regulatory authorities carefully review this EA to ensure that impacts not under the authority of the BLM are disclosed and that possible mitigation measures are identified.

This EA considers direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of the Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative. As stated above, the purpose of this analysis is to provide the decision-makers with information needed to make a final decision that is fully informed and based upon factors relevant to the proposal. It also serves as the summary documentation of analyses conducted on the proposal in order to identify environmental impacts and those mitigation measures which may be necessary to address issues. Analyses in the EA are restricted to the potential environmental impacts associated with additional development of the federal leases in the CRNGDPA including the effects of access road and drill pad construction, additional drilling activities, production testing, produced water disposal, site abandonment and subsequent reclamation. These analyses include the direct effects of construction and drilling activities at or near the proposed drill sites and along the access road corridors, the indirect environmental effects likely expected within a larger study area surrounding each individual drill site and access road corridor, as well as the cumulative impacts of the *Proposed Action* upon the human environment. Additionally, this environmental analysis will include:

- a determination as to whether the Proposed Action is in conformance with BLM policies, regulations, and approved land management direction pertaining to oil and gas exploration and development activities;
- a determination as to whether the Proposed Action is compatible with other resources and permitted land uses in the analysis area; and
- a determination as to whether locations exist for the proposed facilities that would be environmentally suitable, meet the needs of other resource management activities, and which acceptably mitigate surface resource impacts, while honoring the leaseholder's rights.

In compliance with NEPA and CEQ regulations, this EA also considers impacts associated with implementation of the No Action Alternative which would result from BLM denial of the individual permits and/or approvals necessary to develop those federal mineral leases included within the area of analysis. Although a decision to select the No Action Alternative for the CRNGDPA is available to the BLM through denial of any (or all) of the individual Applications for Permit to Drill, the right to drill and/or develop somewhere within the leasehold cannot be denied by the Secretary of Interior (see Section 2.4). Authority to completely deny can only be granted by Congress (*Union Oil Company of California vs. Morton*, 512 F. 2nd 743, 750-751; 9th Cir. 1975).

This Environmental Assessment contains six (6) primary chapters, described below, and various appendices which are directly relevant to this analysis document. These six primary chapters are described as follows:

- **Chapter One, Purpose Of and Need For Action:** Provides an introduction and discusses the proposal's compliance with applicable Federal, State and local laws, regulations and land use plans. The discussion of agency regulatory authority and responsibility is important because in some cases (i.e., emissions, discharge of pollutants, off-site waste disposal, etc.) direct authority to regulate impacts from the Proposed Action or project alternatives is vested with agencies other than the BLM.
- **Chapter Two, Proposed Action and Alternatives:** Provides a detailed description of both the Proposed Action and alternatives as analyzed in this EA.
- **Chapter Three, Affected Environment:** Provides a description of the environment in the project area as it currently exists.
- **Chapter Four, Environmental Consequences:** Describes the impacts associated with each alternative including the Proposed Action. Where appropriate, mitigation measures are identified to reduce impacts to an acceptable level. In some cases these mitigation measures may be outside of the regulatory authority vested with the BLM, but may be under another agency's authority, or can be implemented voluntarily by Intoil.
- **Chapter Five, Mitigation and Monitoring:** Summarizes the mitigation measures identified to eliminate or minimize impacts associated with the Proposed Action and alternatives.
- **Chapter Six, Consultation and Coordination:** Provides a summary of those issues identified during both internal and public scoping during the preparation of this EA. This chapter also provides a list of the EA preparers, reviewers and persons who commented or provided data used in the preparation of the document.

1.4 GENERAL LOCATION AND LAND OWNERSHIP

The CRNGDPA is located approximately 50 miles west of Casper, Wyoming in Natrona County within Townships 35 and 36 North, Range 87 West as shown on Figure 1.1. Access to the project area is provided by the two-lane paved U.S. Highway 20-26 west from Casper to the community of Waltman, thence south/southwest approximately 5.5 miles on Natrona County Road #212. The project area encompasses 6,282.38 acres of mixed federal, state, and private lands. Of this total, 2,640.28 acres are owned by the United States of America, 1,000 acres are owned by the State of Wyoming, and the remaining 2,642.10 acres are owned by private individuals, Table 1.1 summarizes surface ownership within the overall project area. Mineral ownership is summarized in Table 1.2.

Table 1.1

Surface Ownership in the Project Area

Surface Ownership	Acres	Percent of Total
Federal (BLM)	2,640.28	42.0
Private (Fee)	2,642.10	42.1
State of Wyoming (State)	1,000.00	15.9
Total	6,282.38	100.0

Table 1.2

Mineral Ownership in the Project Area

Mineral Ownership	Acres	Percent of Total
Federal (BLM)	4,639.95	73.9
State of Wyoming (State)	1,000.00	15.9
Private (Fee)	642.43	10.2
Total	6,282.38	100.0

Figure 1.4 shows the surface ownership of those lands included within the CRNGDPA and Figure 1.5 shows the mineral ownership of those lands.

1.5 AUTHORIZING ACTIONS AND RELATIONSHIP TO STATUTES AND REGULATIONS, OR OTHER PLANS

Several regulatory agencies have jurisdiction over the Proposed Action or project alternatives and, in some cases, the regulatory authority vested with these various agencies overlaps. Those federal agencies with direct regulatory authority over the Proposed Action and project alternatives include:

- The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), which is responsible for approval of construction, drilling and reclamation activities on federal surface and/or mineral estate within the overall project area.
- The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), which has responsibility for minimizing impacts to listed endangered and/or threatened species, those species proposed for listing as either threatened or endangered, and their critical habitats.

Primary state regulatory oversight for oil/gas well drilling activity is vested with the Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission (WOGCC), while the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality (WDEQ) regulates the off-site disposal of drilling related wastes. These requirements are an integral part of the approval process for the Proposed Action or project alternatives and generally establish minimum criteria for approval of operations on federal lands. A discussion of the primary federal and state permitting requirements for project activities is presented below. Tables 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5 present a brief synopsis of all potentially applicable permit requirements for those federal, state, and local agencies which may have jurisdiction over some aspect of the Proposed Action.

1.5.1 Primary Federal Permitting Requirements

The development of federal oil and gas leases is an integral part of the Bureau of Land Management's oil and gas leasing program under the authority of the *Mineral Leasing Act* of 1920, as amended, the *Federal Land Policy and Management Act* of 1976, as amended, and the *Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act* of 1987. These acts require the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) regulate all surface disturbing activities on surface or mineral estate owned by the United States of America and managed under the jurisdiction of the BLM [30 U.S.C. 226 (g)]. The BLM is responsible for ensuring that development activities are conducted in a manner that minimizes conflicts with other uses and damage to surface resources.

1.5.1.1 Bureau of Land Management

Federal surface and mineral estate located within the CRNGDPA is administered by the BLM's Platte River Resource Area office. Approval of surface disturbing activities associated with additional oil/gas exploration and development activity within the CRNGDPA by the PRRA would fall under the regulations found at 43 CFR Part 2800 for authorization of those activities proposed on federal land by third parties, and on off-lease federal lands by the Operator and at 43 CFR Part 3160 for authorization of those activities proposed on lease regardless of surface ownership. Guidelines have been established for exploration and development operations on onshore federal oil and gas leases in a series of Onshore Oil and Gas Orders which are authorized under 43 CFR Part 3160. These orders detail uniform national standards for minimum levels of performance expected from lessees and operators when conducting oil and gas related activities on federal and Indian lands. Two (2) of these orders are particularly relevant to the Proposed Action or project alternatives and are discussed below.

1.5.1.1.1 Onshore Oil & Gas Order Number 1

Onshore Oil & Gas Order (OOGO) Number 1 requires lessees and operators to conduct their construction, exploration, development and production operations in a manner which:

TABLE 1.3

PERMITS, APPROVALS AND AUTHORIZING ACTIONS NECESSARY FOR ADDITIONAL EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT ON FEDERAL LANDS IN THE COOPER RESERVOIR NATURAL GAS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREA

A. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Agency	Nature of Action
1. Bureau of Land Management	
a. Platte River Resource Area	Approval of APD and Sundry Notices for actions on federal surface and/or mineral estate.
	Approval to vent or flare gas during testing.
	Approval to dispose of produced water.
	Right-of-Way Grants for off-lease/unit facilities.
	Right-of-Way Grants to third party applicants for facilities both in and out of the lease/unit.
	Review cultural resource inventories, consult with SHPO and ACHP.
b. Wyoming Reservoir Management Group	Approval of Unit Agreement and annual Unit Plan of Development.
2. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	
	Review impacts to federally listed, or proposed for listing, threatened or endangered species of fish, wildlife and plants.
	Administers the <i>Migratory Bird Treaty Act</i> .

B. DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

Agency	Nature of Action
1. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Issue permits for the placement of dredged or fill material in or excavation of waters of the U.S. and their adjacent wetlands pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

TABLE 1.4

Agency	Nature of Action
1. Department of Environmental Quality	
a. Air Quality Division	<p>Approval to burn commercial garbage and/or any other open air burning.</p> <p>Permitting/approval for compression sites, flaring, and other natural gas production and processing facilities.</p> <p>Fugitive dust suppression.</p>
b. Land Quality Division	<p>Approval of off-site solid waste disposal.</p> <p>Approval of permits for aggregate material (e.g., sand and gravel) mining activity.</p>
c. Water Quality Division	<p>Approval of Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).</p> <p>Approval of surface discharge of produced water.</p> <p>Approval of waste water and sewage disposal.</p>
2. Department of Transportation	The transport of oversize, overweight or overlength loads (particularly construction and drilling equipment) would require transport permits from the State of Wyoming (for the use of both state and federal highway systems within the State).
3. Oil & Gas Conservation Commission	<p>Primary authority for drilling operations on state and privately owned mineral resources, and secondary authority for drilling operations on federal lands.</p> <p>Authority to allow or prohibit flaring or venting of gas on private or state owned minerals.</p> <p>Aquifer exemption permit.</p> <p>Approval of directional drilling operations.</p> <p>Rules and regulations governing drilling units.</p> <p>Underground Injection Control (UIC) permits.</p>

TABLE 1.4 - Continued

**STATE OF WYOMING PERMITS, APPROVALS AND AUTHORIZING ACTIONS NECESSARY FOR ADDITIONAL
EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE COOPER RESERVOIR NATURAL GAS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREA**

Agency	Nature of Action
3. Oil & Gas Conservation Commission	Approval of exceptions to well spacing patterns established under WOGCC Rule 302 or special orders approved by the commission.
4. State Engineer's Office	Issue permits for the appropriation of surface and ground water.
5. State Historic Preservation Office	Consultation concerning inventory of, and impacts to, cultural and historical resources.

TABLE 1.5

**NATRONA COUNTY PERMITS, APPROVALS AND AUTHORIZING ACTIONS NECESSARY FOR ADDITIONAL
EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE COOPER RESERVOIR NATURAL GAS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT AREA**

Agency	Nature of Action
1. Health Department	Small wastewater (septic) system permits, where applicable.
2. Planning Department	Administers zoning changes, where applicable.
	Construction and conditional use permits for all new structures and non-mineral mining activity (aggregate material) where appropriate.
3. Road and Bridge Department	Driveway access permits where new roads intersect with existing county roads.
	Road use agreements and/or oversize trip permits when traffic on county roads exceeds established size/weight limitations or where the potential for excessive road damage exists.

- 1) conforms with applicable Federal laws and regulations and with State and local laws and regulations to the extent that such state and local laws are applicable to operations on federal or Indian leases;
- 2) conforms with the terms of the mineral lease;
- 3) results in diligent development and efficient resource recovery;
- 4) protects the lease from drainage;
- 5) affords adequate safeguards for the environment;
- 6) results in the proper reclamation of disturbed lands;
- 7) conforms with currently available technology and practice;
- 8) assures that underground sources of fresh water will not be endangered by any fluid injection; and
- 9) otherwise assures the protection of the public health and safety.

Furthermore, the order holds the operator “...fully accountable for their contractors’ and subcontractors’ compliance with the requirements of the approved permit and/or plan”. OOGO Number 1 specifically requires survey work and a related report if the responsible Surface Management Agency (SMA) has reason to believe that properties listed, or potentially eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) are present in the area of potential effect. The order also requires the responsible SMA to identify any threatened or endangered species, critical habitat problems, and other environmental concerns (e.g., wilderness and wilderness study areas, wild and scenic rivers, known or potential surface geological hazards, etc.). In compliance with OOGO Number 1, surveys for both cultural resources and threatened and endangered species either have been or will be completed for the Proposed Action and applicable project alternatives (refer to Sections 3.4 and 4.9.3, respectively).

1.5.1.1.2 Onshore Oil & Gas Order Number 2

Onshore Oil & Gas Order (OOGO) Number 2 establishes specific and detailed requirements along with minimum standards for each aspect of the drilling operation including:

- 1) well control during drilling;
- 2) casing and cementing;
- 3) drilling medium and circulating system;

- 4) drill stem testing;
- 5) special drilling operations; and
- 6) procedures for plugging and abandonment.

OOGO Number 2 requires that blowout prevention equipment (BOPE) be installed, used, maintained, and tested in a manner necessary to ensure well control at all times and is designed to prevent the uncontrolled release of formation fluids and/or gases to the surface. The BOPE must be in place and operational prior to drilling out from under the surface casing shoe (unless otherwise approved by the BLM in the site specific conditions of approval) and must be capable of complete closure of the well bore should an emergency arise. In some instances, OOGO Number 2 relies on existing standards prepared by the American Petroleum Institute (API), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and other agencies as applicable.

1.5.1.2 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Any area that provides critical habitat for federally-listed and/or candidate (proposed for listing) threatened or endangered species and that may be potentially affected by surface-disturbing activities is protected by the *Endangered Species Act* (ESA) of 1969, as amended. The ESA obligates Federal agencies to ensure that actions which they authorize or permit "...are not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered species..." [42 U.S.C. 1536(a)(2)], with the term "jeopardize" defined by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service as follows:

"to engage in any activity or program which reasonably would be expected to reduce the reproduction, number or distribution of a listed species to such an extent as to appreciably reduce the likelihood of the survival and recovery of that species in the wild" (50 CFR 420.02).

The ESA is designed to protect threatened or endangered species in two (2) primary ways:

- 1) by prohibiting the jeopardizing of their continued existence, and
- 2) by indirectly prohibiting the adverse modification of their habitat

The permitting agency (BLM) is responsible for determining if any threatened, endangered or candidate species may be present in the project area, and is prohibited from authorizing or permitting any activities which would jeopardize the continued existence of any T/E species identified within the project area.

1.5.2 Primary State Permitting Requirements

In addition to the federal permitting requirements discussed in Section 1.5.1, additional permits would also be required from agencies of the State of Wyoming (refer to Table 1.4). A description of these responsible state agencies and their applicable permit requirements are presented below.

1.5.2.1 Wyoming Department of Transportation

The transport of oversize, overweight or overlength loads (particularly construction and drilling equipment) would require transport permits from the State of Wyoming (for the use of both state and federal highway systems within the State).

1.5.2.2 Wyoming Oil & Gas Conservation Commission

Pursuant to Wyoming Statute 30-5-101 *et seq.*, the Wyoming Oil & Gas Conservation Commission (WOGCC) has adopted rules and regulations for the production and conservation of oil and gas as well as rules of practice and procedure pertaining thereto. As a result, Intoil must secure approval from the WOGCC for drilling operations on each of the 73 additional wells proposed herein, in addition to the federal APD approval process where applicable.

The permitting process and informational requirements are similar to the federal APD process and apply to all patented, state and federal lands within the State of Wyoming, with the exception of tribal lands located within the Wind River Indian Reservation. Following is a summary of those WOGCC rules and regulations which are applicable to the Proposed Action or project alternatives.

- **Rule 302 - Location of Wells.** Establishes minimum spacing patterns (well densities) within the State of Wyoming.
- **Rule 308 - Application for Permit to Drill or Deepen a Well.** Requires oil/gas operators to file an APD with the WOGCC and obtain approval therefrom prior to the commencement of drilling activities within the State.
- **Rule 318 -** Establishes minimum criteria for plugging operations on abandoned oil/gas wells.
- **Rule 322 - General Drilling Rules.** Establishes the minimum downhole design criteria applicable to all oil/gas drilling operations.
- **Rule 323 - Blowout Preventers.** Establishes the minimum criteria for well control during all drilling operations.

- **Rule 401 - Pollution and Surface Damage.** Regulates the construction of earthen reserve and/or water retention pits, surface and subsurface disposal of drilling fluids and generally prohibits the pollution of streams, underground water, or unreasonable damage to the surface of the leased premises or other lands.

The rules and regulations adopted by the WOGCC are similar to the oil/gas operational regulations (Onshore Oil and Gas Orders) adopted and enforced by the BLM (refer to Section 1.5.1.1), and with which the Proposed Action or project alternatives must comply.

1.5.2.3 Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality

The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality issues permits for and regulates the off-lease disposal of oil/gas related fluids and solids generated during drilling, completion, and production operations. Any fluids and/or solid wastes generated during the drilling operation and subsequently removed from the well location for disposal would require an approved permit from the WDEQ, should disposal occur off-lease or in a previously unapproved location.

The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality/Air Quality Division (WDEQ/AQD) also requires a specific air quality pre-construction permit review in order to examine emissions from proposed pollutant sources prior to their construction (i.e.; compressor engines or gas plants, etc.). WDEQ/AQD would examine project specific air pollutant emission and potential air quality effects, per requirements of both Wyoming and Federal air quality standards and regulations, and determine which facilities must obtain air pollutant emission permits. For example, individual well sites could be permitted following a limited start-up period, as required by the WDEQ/AQD. Thus as development occurs, site specific air quality analysis would be performed and emission control measures may be required in order to ensure protection of air quality resources.

1.5.2.4 Wyoming State Engineer

The Office of the Wyoming State Engineer issues temporary permits authorizing the appropriation of both unallocated surface water and/or ground water for use in drilling operations pursuant to WS 41-3-110. These temporary appropriation permits are restricted to:

- a specific diversion point,
- a specific point and type of use,
- a specific quantity of unappropriated water, and
- a specific time frame for the total appropriation.

Moreover, these temporary appropriation permits are contingent upon the availability of unappropriated water(s) being present in the designated stream or aquifer at the time of the requested diversion.

1.6 CONFORMANCE WITH EXISTING LAND MANAGEMENT PLANS

The Cooper Reservoir Natural Gas Development Project, as proposed by Intoil, would be consistent with management direction contained in the Platte River Resource Area *Resource Management Plan* dated July 1985. Furthermore, all operations proposed by Intoil would be conducted in full compliance with the terms and conditions of the federal leases involved in the Proposed Action or project alternatives, applicable Onshore Oil and Gas Orders, 43 CFR Part 2800 regarding right-of-way grants, and also with oil and gas leasing regulations as contained in 43 CFR Part 3100, specifically with subpart 3162 concerning Requirements for Operating Rights, Owners and Operators.

The Proposed Action and alternatives are not inconsistent with state and local government programs, plans, zoning, and applicable regulations.